

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NOUAKC 01375 221651Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 ACDA-12 IO-13 /112 W
-----079307 230112Z /73

R 221440Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9562
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
CINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 1375

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, MR, SS, FR
SUBJ: SAHARA WATCH: POLISARIO AND FRENCH ACTIVITY

1. IN CONVERSATION MAY 21 FRENCH MILITARY SOURCES TOLD
EMBOFF THAT POLISARIO HAD CONDUCTED TWO ATTACKS ON BIR
MOGHREIN AND F'DERICK MAYHBQO & 20. ALTHOUGH ATTACKS WERE
INSIGNIFICANT, SOURCES SAID THAT FRENCH BREGUET ATLANTIC
OBSERVER AIRCRAFT WERE OPERATING CONSTANTLY IN AREA DURING
TIME ATTACKS TOOK PLACE AND WERE PREPARED TO CALL IN JAGUAR
STRIKES HAD MAURITANIAN ARMED FORCES REQUESTED THEM TO DO SO.
HOWEVER, REQUESTS NEVER CAME.

2. ACCORDING TO SOURCES, THERE ARE NOW SOME EOUJAGUARS IN
DAKAR AS WELL AS BREGUETS AND KC-135S. GREGUETS FLY MISSIONS
OF 12-14 HOURS, AN EXHAUSTING ORDEAL FOR AIRCRAFTS' CREWS.
DURING RECENT CONTACT WITH POLISARIO, A SAM -7 MISSILE
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EXPLODED WITHIN 20 METERS OF ONE OF THE BREGUETS.

3. SOURCES ALSO CONFIRMED RECENT REPORT (NOUAKCHOTT 1303)
THAT DURING MAY 3-4 ATTACKS ON POLISARIO COLUMN, JAGUAR
HAD BEEN HIT BY DEBRIS FROM EXPLODING LAND ROVER. APPARENTLY
DURING THIS INCIDENT, SOURCES INDICATED, A FRENCH HELICOPTER
HAD PICKED UP SAM-7 MISSILE ABANDONED BY RETREATING

POLISARIO AND HAD SENT IT TO PARIS FOR ANALYSIS. SOURCES NOTED THAT HELICOPTERS OPERATE REGULARLY IN AREA OF JAGUAR STRIKES IN ORDER TO AID PILOTS WHO MIGHT BE DOWNED.

4. SOURCES SAID THAT POLISARIO COLUMNS MOVE EXCLUSIVELY BY NIGHT AND THAT GUERRILLAS OFTEN SET UP OR JOIN GROUP OF NOMADIC TENTS DURING DAY, THUS MAKING DETECTION EXTREMELY DIFFICULT. FRENCH AIR FORCE AS YET UNABLE TO DO MUCH AGAINST POLISARIO COLUMNS BY NIGHT. SIZE OF COLUMNS HAS BEEN GREATLY REDUCED.

5. SOURCES SAID THAT SERVICES OF BREGUETS WERE NOT AVAILABLE TO MOROCCAN AIR FORCE. DUNBAR

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